

## Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PER-01 MMO-01 /013 W

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R 171211Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9159

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APER, AFSP, SY

SUBJECT: FOREIGN SERVICE LOCAL WORKING GROUP

REF: (A) STATE 081405; (B) DAMASCUS 1910, (C) STATE 093762

1. REF. A ADVISED THAT DAMASCUS WILL BE A PARTICIPANT POST IN AN FSL POSITION CLASSIFICATION STUDY. REF. C. INDICATED THAT THE SURVEY TEAM WOULD PROBABLY VISIT HERE BEFORE THE END OF THIS CALENDAR YEAR.

2. THE POSITION CLASSIFICATION STUDY IS VERY MUCH NEEDED AND THE POST WELCOMES THE SURVEY TEAM'S VISIT. OF EQUAL IF NOT GREATER IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY THAN THE POSITION CLASSIFICATION STUDY, HOWEVER, IS THE POST'S NEED FOR A WAGE SCALE SURVEY. THE ARRIVAL HERE OF BEIRUT FSL'S ON TDY HAS BROUGHT TO LIGHT A DISPARITY BETWEEN FSL PAY IN DAMASCUS AND FSL PAY IN BEIRUT. THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT A DISPARITY IN WAGES IN ADJOINING COUNTRIES PROVES NOTHING. IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, IT POINTED UP WHAT WAS REALLY ALREADY KNOWN, TO WIT, THAT THE EMBASSY'S FSL PAY SCALE NEED UPDATING. E.G, AID HAS A NEED FOR ONE OR MORE PROFESSIONAL LEVEL EMPLOYEES (ENGINEERS). INFORMAL INQUIRIES TO FIVE OR SIX ORGANIZATIONS EMPLOYING ENGINEERS HAVE ELICITED INFORMATION THAT PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS IN DAMASCUS START AT SALARIES OF SL 60,000 TO SL 82,000. THE TOP SALARY ON THE LOCAL SCALE (FSL-1) IS LESS THAN SL 37,000 P.A. THE DAMASCUS WAGE SCALE PLAN DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY POSITIONS AT THE P (PROFESSIONAL) LEVEL.

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3. THE WAGE SCALE SHOULD BE ADJUSTED AND BROUGHT UP

TO DATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IF THIS IS NOT DONE, THERE WILL NOT ONLY BE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON MORALE OF DAMASCUS LOCALS, BUT IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THE MISSION TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY IN THE LOCAL LABOR MARKET FOR COMPETENT EMPLOYEES IN THE MONTHS IMMEDIATELY AHEAD WHEN, DESPITE EFFORTS TO AVOID IT, THIS EMBASSY WILL ENTER A GROWTH PERIOD.

4. THE POST HAS LEARNED THAT A CONTRACT TEAM FROM THE US IS IN THE AREA AND THAT THEY ARE CONDUCTING BOTH JOB CLASSIFICATION AND WAGE SCALE SURVEYS CONCURRENTLY; THAT THEY HAVE COMPLETED THE SURVEYS IN AMMAN AND ARE NOW CONDUCTING THE DUAL SURVEY IN JIDDA. WE ARE INFORMED, TOO, THAT THE TEAM'S SURVEYS AND REPORTS ARE THOROUGHLY PROFESSIONAL IN EVERY RESPECT. THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING SUCH SURVEYS CONDUCTED CONCURRENTLY AND BY PROFESSIONALS, ARE SO OBVIOUS THAT DAMASCUS REQUESTS THAT THE SAME TEAM BE AUTHORIZED TO CONDUCT SIMILAR STUDIES HERE, WHILE THEY ARE STILL IN THIS GENERAL AREA AND, IF THEIR SCHEDULE PERMITS, TO DO SO IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEY HAVE COMPLETED THE JIDDA STUDIES.

5. FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.  
MURPHY

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